



Soil Conservation Districts

Allegany	(301) 777-1747, ext. 4
Anne Arundel	(410) 222-7822
Baltimore County	(410) 666-1188, ext. 3
Calvert	(410) 535-1521, ext. 3
Caroline	(410) 479-1202, ext. 3
Carroll	(410) 848-8200, ext. 3
Catoctin	(301) 695-2803, ext. 3
Cecil	(410) 398-4411, ext. 3
Charles	(301) 934-9588, ext. 3
Dorchester	(410) 228-5640, ext. 3
Frederick	(301) 695-2803, ext. 3
Garrett	(301) 334-6951
Harford	(410) 838-6181, ext. 3
Howard	(410) 489-7987
Kent	(410) 778-5150, ext. 3
Montgomery	(301) 590-2855
Prince George's	(301) 574-5162, ext. 3
Queen Anne's	(410) 758-3136, ext. 3
St. Mary's	(301) 475-8402, ext. 3
Somerset	(410) 651-1575, ext. 3
Talbot	(410) 822-1577, ext. 3
Washington	(301) 797-6821, ext. 3
Wicomico	(410) 546-4777, ext. 3
Worcester	(410) 632-5439, ext. 3

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Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor
Michael S. Steele, Lt. Governor
Lewis R. Riley, Secretary of Agriculture
John R. Brooks, D.V.M., Deputy Secretary

The **New** Look of
CREP
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
**Absolutely the Best Environmental
Incentive Program Available to
Maryland Farmers**



**CREP Pays Farmers Attractive Rental Rates to
Plant Streamside Buffers, Create Wetlands and
Provide Wildlife Habitat on Enrolled Lands**

Since 1997 Maryland's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) has helped thousands of Maryland farmers install streamside buffers and other conservation practices on their farms while providing them with a dependable income on enrolled lands. This completely voluntary program pays landowners annual rental incentive payments of \$50 to \$200 an acre, a one-time signing bonus of up to \$150 an acre, up to 87.5 percent cost-share and practice incentive payments worth 40 percent of the eligible practice costs.

If you are a farmer or landowner who missed out on CREP during its initial offering, there's good news. This popular program has been improved and extended in order to help even more land-owners reduce soil erosion, protect water quality and create habitat for endangered species while earning money on enrolled lands. CREP builds upon the success of the original program by offering more eligible practices and more opportunities for farmers to protect natural resources and create wildlife habitat.

CREP offers:

- Attractive rental rates
- Annual rental incentive payments of \$50 to \$200 an acre
- A one-time signing bonus of up to \$150 an acre
- Up to 87.5 percent cost-share for most practices
- A one-time incentive payment of 40 percent of the eligible cost of installing certain practices
- Permanent easement option
- On-going sign up
- Maintenance payments
- Voluntary enrollment



Bonus Rental Payments

Farmers enrolled in CREP receive attractive annual rental payments to take streamside property, certain highly erodible land or wetlands out of production for 10 to 15 years. Farmers agree to maintain grass, shrubs, trees or wetlands for the life of the contract. Here’s how it works.

A farmer who plants a streamside buffer receives a rental rate for the site plus:

- A \$200/acre bonus for the first 50 feet of a riparian forest buffer and a \$50 per acre bonus for buffers extending from 51 to 100 feet from a stream
- A \$150/acre bonus for the first 50 feet of a riparian vegetative buffer and a \$50 per acre bonus for buffers extending from 51 to 100 feet from a stream
- Most other enrolled practices are eligible for a \$50 per acre bonus

Maintenance Payments

Annual rental payments may include an additional amount of up to \$10 per acre, per year to perform certain maintenance on enrolled lands.

Farmer Responsibilities

Landowners and farmers must agree to maintain grass, shrubs, trees or wetlands for the life of the contract—10 to 15 years.

Permanent Easement Option

Landowners have the option of selling a permanent easement on their land to the State of Maryland. This can be done directly, or through cooperative contracts with the Rural Legacy Program. Payments are based on the fair market value of foregone development and agricultural productivity. Easements may be administered by the local soil conservation district, the Department of Natural Resources or local land trusts.

Eligible Land

Cropland next to a stream or highly erodible land within 1,000 feet of a stream that has been planted to an agricultural commodity during four of the six years from 1996 through 2001 and is still physically and legally capable of being planted may be eligible. Marginal pastureland next to a stream may also be eligible for certain practices. By targeting only the most environmentally sensitive lands, the new CREP was redesigned with an eye toward keeping farmable crop and pastureland available to farmers.

Water Quality Benefits

Wetlands, vegetative buffers and streamside forests serve as natural filters for pollutants running off the land. They also help control flooding and erosion, while creating habitat for wildlife. Studies have shown that forest buffers can remove up to 90 percent of the nutrients washing off the land before they reach waterways.

Enrollment Goals

The United States Environmental Protection Agency’s Chesapeake Bay Program has established ambitious goals to reduce nutrients entering the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries by 2010 while increasing habitat and restoring wetlands. When fully implemented at 100,000 acres, CREP will help Maryland to achieve its water quality goals by:

- Reducing an estimated 5,750 tons of nitrogen and 550 tons of phosphorus from entering Maryland waterways each year
- Reducing the amount of sediment entering the Bay and its tributaries by approximately 200,000 tons annually
- Establishing and enhancing 93,000 acres of riparian buffers, 5,000 acres of wetland habitat and 2,000 acres of habitat for declining, threatened or endangered species including the bald eagle, Eastern bog turtle, dwarf wedge mussel, glassy darter and harperella, a nearly extinct aquatic plant that grows only where suitable water quality conditions are present.



Up to 87.5 Percent Cost-Share for Most Practices

Maryland’s Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program and USDA’s Farm Service Agency will provide landowners with financial assistance to install best management practices on enrolled lands. Forest and vegetative buffers, stream protection measures and wetlands restoration projects are covered under the program along with several new practices aimed at protecting wildlife habitat. A one-time financial incentive of 40 percent of the eligible cost of installing certain practices is also available. Free technical assistance to install BMPs is provided by local soil conservation districts.

Cost-Share Benefits

Habitat for Declining Species	Up to 50%
Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer	Up to 87.5%
Marginal Pastureland Wildlife Habitat Buffer	Up to 87.5%
Retirement of Highly Erodible Land Adjacent to Waterways	Up to 87.5%
Riparian Forest Buffers	Up to 87.5%
Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife	Up to 50%
Stream Crossings	Up to 87.5%
Stream Fencing	Up to 87.5%
Vegetative Buffers	Up to 87.5%
Watering Troughs	Up to 87.5 %
Wetlands Restoration	Up to 75%

Participating Agencies

- Maryland Department of Agriculture
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Soil Conservation Districts
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

How to Enroll

Sign-up for Maryland CREP is ongoing and continues through December 31, 2007 or until acreage goals are met, whichever comes first. For more information, contact your local soil conservation district or Farm Service Agency.